

POLK COUNTY
May 18, 2009
7:00 PM BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' REGULAR MEETING
Polk County Courthouse
40 Courthouse Square
Columbus, N.C.

PRESENT: Chairperson Walker, Commissioners Gasperson, McDermott and Melton. Also in attendance County Manager Whitson, County Attorney Hix, and Clerk to the Board, Anne Britton. ABSENT: Vice-Chairperson Watson.

1. Call to Order – Chairperson Cindy Walker.
2. Invocation - Commissioner Gasperson.
3. Pledge of Allegiance – County Manager Whitson.
4. Approval of Regular Board of Commissioner minutes for May 4, 2009. Commissioner McDermott made a motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.
5. Approval of Agenda – County Manager Whitson added the following additions to the agenda: 6(c) DSS - One job title change; 6(f) JCPC funding allocations; 10(a) Dale Holland's monthly report; 10(b) Planning Board recommendation for the Mountainside Ridgeline Ordinances; 10(c) Planning Board recommendation for the Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Ordinance; 10(d) Planning Board request for a 60 day extension for Subdivision & Zoning Ordinance. Commissioner Gasperson made a motion to approve agenda with additions, seconded by Commissioner McDermott and the motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Walker announced the receipt of a Polk County Community Grant of \$11,000 and a grant from North Carolina Department of Pollution Prevention for \$15,000. Chairperson Walker recognized and thanked the Recycling Board.

6. Budget Update and Decisions -
 - (a) Saluda Fire Department - Mr. Whitson read the letter from Shane Bradley, Chief of the Saluda Fire & Rescue. In his letter, Mr. Bradley stated that Saluda Fire & Rescue had reached the decision that they can operate and function with the revenue neutral tax rate with the growth rate which the County had proposed. Mr. Whitson recommended in the proposed budget that all fire departments and Harmon Field go with the revenue neutral tax rate with the growth rate.

Sunny View and Mill Spring had both wanted to increase their tax rate which was expressed at an earlier budget work session. Commissioner Melton supported holding public hearings at each of these townships to hear public comment. Commissioner McDermott was opposed to any extra tax burden for citizens. Chairperson Walker hoped they could find sources of revenue other than a tax increase, and supported the revenue neutral with the growth rate. Commissioner Gasperson made a motion to invite the Fire Department Chiefs to the June 8, 2009 public hearing on the budget, seconded by Commissioner McDermott and the motion carried 3 – 1 (Melton opposed).

- (b) New Position in Tax Assessor's Office - John Bridgers, Tax Assessor, requested a part-time position, 28 hours per week, in his department. The revaluation part-time position ends June 30th. He also feels that, as a benefit to all taxpayers, the department needs one more full time position. Commissioner McDermott made a motion to fund the 28 hour part-time position in the Tax Assessor's office, seconded by Commissioner Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.
- (c) (1) Eligibility Position and (2) Job Title Change at DSS - (1) Commissioner Gasperson made a motion to approve the fully funded eligibility position, funded through September 30, 2010, and to begin as soon as possible, seconded by Commissioner McDermott and the motion carried unanimously. (2) Discussion on this item was deferred. The County Manager and the DSS Director will work together and bring more information back to the June 8, 2009, meeting in order for the Board to make this decision.
- (d) Sheriff's Department 09/10 Budget - Mr. Whitson read a letter from Sheriff Hill regarding a withdrawal request and a purchase request. Sheriff Hill withdrew his request for funding for a Chief Deputy position. However, he would like for the position to remain in place for the Sheriff's Office, but not have funding considered for the 2009-2010 budget year. He also requested two additional items for the Sheriff's Office. The first was the purchase of a two wheel drive Ford Explorer, the cost of which would come out of this year's fiscal budget. This would save on the gas line item within the Sheriff's budget. The second request was to add \$10,000 to the part-time salary line item to provide for additional support in areas such as the evidence room, patrol division support, court security and other additional needs of the Sheriff's Office. Commissioner Melton made a motion to approve Sheriff Hill's requests as written in his letter, seconded by Commissioner Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.
- (e) Purchase of Ford Explorer - Commissioner Melton made a motion to approve BA #113 for the Stott's Ford's purchase of \$22,900 plus tax (\$694)

for a total of \$23,594 for the Ford Explorer, seconded by Commissioner Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.

- (f) JCPC funding allocations for 2009/10 - Commissioner Melton made a motion to approve the allocations, seconded by Commissioner McDermott and the motion carried unanimously.
- 7. Travel & Tourism Revised By-Laws - Director Melinda Young reviewed the recommended revised by-laws. Commissioner Melton made some suggested changes, such as inviting the equine and winery residents of the County to join the board. Ms. Young will bring the revised by-laws back to the Board on June 8th for approval.
- 8. Tax Collector – Melissa Bowlin, Tax Collector, requested the April refund of \$330.00. Commissioner Melton made the motion to approve, seconded by Commissioner Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.
- 9. St. Luke’s Hospital – Kipp McIntyre, Economic Development Director, reported to the Board on the meeting of the recently appointed working committee. The committee will return to the June 22, 2009, Board of Commissioners meeting with a proposed strategy for St. Luke’s Hospital. This was an informational report only.
- 10. Courthouse Restoration Committee – John Vining, Courthouse Restoration Committee, presented the Board with a check for \$7,762. Commissioner Melton recognized Mr. Vining and said how truly blessed the County is to have him and his family. He said Mr. Vining is a true asset to the County who has helped raise more than \$470,000 through grants and donations for the Historic Courthouse.

(a). Dale Holland, Holland Consulting Planners, Inc. gave his monthly report on the Polk County Comprehensive Plan. The report is filed in the Planning Department.

(b & c). Lisa Krolak, Planning Board representative, reported back to the Board of Commissioners on the Planning Board’s written recommendations that the Commissioners adopt the proposed Mountainside and Ridgeline Protection Ordinances as well as the proposed Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance.

Commissioner Melton made a motion to schedule a public hearing for June 22, 2009 @7:00 pm for these ordinances, seconded by Commissioner McDermott and the motion carried unanimously.

(d) Commissioner Melton made a motion to grant the Planning Board a 60 day extension to continue the review process of the Subdivision &

Zoning Ordinance, seconded by Commissioner McDermott and the motion carried unanimously.

11. Western Highlands Network – The Fiscal Monitoring Report for 2009 fiscal year 3rd quarter, ending March 31, 2009, per G.S. 122C-117(c). County Manager Whitson reviewed the report, which is on file in the County Manager's office.
12. Financial Update for the Month Ending April 30, 2009 – Sandra Hughes, Finance Officer reported on the following: Financial Narrative ending April 30, 2009, the General Fund balance sheet and Statement of Revenues. This report is on file in the County Manager's office.
13. Declare Surplus – Transportation Authority has a 2006 Ford 500 Sedan – mileage 127,115. Commissioner Melton made a motion to declare the 2006 Ford 500 Sedan surplus, seconded by Commissioner Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.
14. Board Vacancies – Mental Health Advisory Board, 3 applications and 5 vacancies. Nursing Care Community Advisory Committee - Ombudsman, 1 application and 5 vacancies. These applications were reviewed and will be voted on at the next meeting.
15. Citizen Comments on Non-Agenda items - (1) Siegfried Forster discussed his request for water on Landrum Road. Mr. Whitson explained that the Waterline Extension Policy needs to be approved, and the budget needs to be approved first.
16. Commissioner Comments - (1) Commissioner Gasperson expressed his satisfaction with the Courthouse. (2) Commissioner McDermott thanked the Planning Board, County Planner Cathy Ruth, and her assistant, Kristy Tipton, for their hard work on the ordinances reviewed at this meeting. (3) Commissioner Melton also expressed his pleasure with the Courthouse. (4) Chairperson Cindy Walker thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.
17. Commissioner Melton made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Gasperson and the motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:

POLK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Anne Britton
Clerk to the Board

Cindy Walker
Chairperson